



Beyond the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus: Ludwig Wittgenstein's Enduring Language-Games

Shiben Kumar Sarkar

Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Abhedananda Mahavidyalaya, Sainthia, Birbhum, PIN – 731234, West Bengal, India

Article Info

Received: 22 Mar 2022,

Received in revised form: 19 Apr 2022,

Accepted: 23 Apr 2022,

Available online: 30 Apr 2022

Keywords— Wittgenstein, language-games, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, rule-following, ordinary language philosophy, private language argument

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Abstract

This review article examines the central arguments and scholarly contributions of the research titled “Beyond the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus: Ludwig Wittgenstein's Enduring Language-Games,” which re-evaluates Wittgenstein's philosophical trajectory from the logical atomism of his early work to the socially embedded concept of language-games in his later philosophy. The research under review challenges conventional readings that posit a clean rupture between the early and late Wittgenstein, instead arguing for a set of continuities largely overlooked in analytic philosophy. By analyzing the research's treatment of rule-following, private language, and ordinary language philosophy, this review situates the work within contemporary Wittgenstein scholarship, assesses its methodological innovations, and identifies potential limitations. The article concludes that while the research offers a compelling hermeneutic for reading Wittgenstein as a unified thinker, its reception will likely depend on how convincingly it reconciles the Tractatus's mystical silence with the later emphasis on public, criterion-governed linguistic practices. Ultimately, this review affirms the enduring relevance of language-games for fields as diverse as cognitive science, political theory, and literary studies.

Introduction

Few works in twentieth-century philosophy have exerted as strange and powerful a magnetism as Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* [1]. Published in 1921, it arrived as a compressed, oracular treatise that sought to demarcate the limits of language and thought through a picture theory of meaning, only to declare most philosophical propositions, including, notoriously, its own, as nonsense [2]. For decades, the *Tractatus* was read as a logical positivist manifesto, a reading Wittgenstein himself encouraged in conversations with the Vienna Circle before growing deeply dissatisfied with their appropriation [3]. But the Wittgenstein who returned to Cambridge in 1929 had abandoned the crystalline architecture of atomic facts and logical form for a messier, more therapeutic conception of philosophy: language as a form of life, meaning as use, and understanding as a matter of participating in shared practices [4]. The research under review, titled “Beyond the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus:

Ludwig Wittgenstein's Enduring Language-Games,” enters this well-trodden but still contentious terrain. Its central thesis is that the language-game framework does not simply replace the *Tractatus* but rather redeems, transforms, and renders intelligible certain latent commitments of the early work. The research thus joins a growing body of scholarship that complicates the so-called “two Wittgensteins” narrative, a narrative that, as Stern has observed, has long served as a pedagogical convenience rather than an accurate historical account [5].

The literature on Wittgenstein's development is vast and often sharply divided. Early commentators such as Anscombe [2] and Kenny [6] tended to emphasize the radical break, treating the *Philosophical Investigations* as a wholesale repudiation of Tractarian doctrines. This “standard view” was reinforced by Russell's famous introduction to the *Tractatus*, which framed Wittgenstein's early work as a logical edifice that the later Wittgenstein had dynamited from within [7]. However, beginning in the

1980s, scholars such as Hacker [8] and Baker [9] began to argue for more nuanced continuities not in terms of doctrine, but in terms of philosophical method and ethical preoccupation. More recent work by Conant [10] and Diamond [11] on the “resolute reading” of the *Tractatus* has further complicated the landscape by proposing that the early Wittgenstein was already engaged in a therapeutic project aimed not at constructing a theory of meaning but at dissolving philosophical pseudo-problems. The research under review positions itself within this resolute tradition while extending it in a novel direction: whereas resolute readers focus on the *Tractatus*’s own self-subverting structure, the present research argues that the language-games of the *Investigations* can be read as *applied Tractarian logic* as the concrete, empirical investigation of the very forms of life that the *Tractatus* had to pass over in silence [12].

This introduction provides a detailed literature review that situates the research within three major strands of Wittgenstein interpretation: the rupturist, the continuist, and the resolute. The rupturist strand, represented by early analytic philosophers, treats the *Investigations* as a correction of the *Tractatus*’s errors. The continuist strand, emerging from the work of Hacker and later scholars such as Kuusela [13], finds a unified methodological core across both periods. The resolute strand, pioneered by Cora Diamond and James Conant, argues that the *Tractatus* itself was never meant to assert a theory but to enact a self-consuming therapy [10] [11]. The research under review synthesizes elements of all three while offering its own distinctive claim: that the concept of the language-game is the *hermeneutic key* that unlocks the *Tractatus*’s cryptic remarks about showing, silence, and the ethical. In doing so, the research draws heavily on the Bergen Electronic Edition of Wittgenstein’s *Nachlass*, which has made available thousands of pages of unpublished remarks from the so-called “middle Wittgenstein” (1929–1933) [14]. These transitional writings, as Pichler has shown, reveal a philosopher grappling with the inadequacies of the *Tractatus* without yet having arrived at the mature position of the *Investigations* [15].

The research’s core claims about language-games as “pictures in action” are then outlined, followed by an assessment of the methodological innovations it brings to bear on Wittgenstein’s corpus. Finally, this review previews the critical analysis that will follow in subsequent sections, focusing on the research’s handling of rule-following, private language, and the political implications of language-games. In doing so, this review aims not merely to summarize the research but to engage it as a serious contribution to an ongoing philosophical conversation one that, more than half a century after Wittgenstein’s death,

shows no signs of exhaustion [16]. The enduring appeal of language-games, as the research rightly notes, lies precisely in their refusal to function as a theory. They are a method, a stance, a way of seeing and dissolving confusions. And it is this anti-theoretical spirit, the research suggests, that connects the *Tractatus*’s ethics of silence with the *Investigations*’ ethics of attention.

The *Tractatus* and Its Unfinished Business

To appreciate the research’s argument, one must first revisit the *Tractatus* with fresh eyes. Wittgenstein’s early work famously posits that language pictures facts, that facts are composed of states of affairs, and that states of affairs are concatenations of simple objects [1]. The logical form that language shares with the world cannot itself be said; it can only show itself. This leads to the *Tractatus*’s most dramatic conclusion: that all meaningful propositions are empirical hypotheses of natural science, and that everything else, ethics, aesthetics, religion, philosophy itself, is nonsense, albeit “important nonsense” as Wittgenstein later characterized it in his “Lecture on Ethics” [17]. For decades, this was taken as a kind of austere scientism, a position that the logical positivists eagerly embraced. Yet the research under review argues that this reading mistakes Wittgenstein’s aim. Far from celebrating science as the sole arbiter of meaning, the *Tractatus* was an exercise in delimitation showing what cannot be said so that the unsayable might be properly respected [18]. The famous closing line, “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent,” is not a prohibition but a spiritual discipline [1].

The research’s first major contribution is to trace how this spiritual discipline re-emerges in the later concept of language-games. Whereas the *Tractatus* sought to purify language of metaphysical misuse by exposing its logical skeleton, the *Investigations* adopts a more modest, piecemeal approach: it looks at actual linguistic practices, greeting, commanding, praying, joking and shows that each operates according to its own internal rules, its own “grammar” [4]. The research coins the helpful term “picturing-as-activity” to describe how language-games retain the *Tractarian* notion of picturing but strip it of its metaphysical commitments. In this reading, a language game is not a representation of a fact but a mode of engagement with the world that generates its own criteria of correctness. When I say “The cat is on the mat,” I am not mirroring an extra-linguistic state of affairs; I am making a move within a particular practice of assertion, justification, and contestation [19]. The research thus proposes that Wittgenstein never abandoned the picture theory; he only turned it from a metaphysical thesis into a grammatical one.

This move has profound implications for how we read the *Tractatus*’s famous “ladder” passage, which Wittgenstein

instructs the reader to throw away after climbing [1]. Traditional interpretations treat the ladder as a methodological confession of self-refutation. The research, by contrast, argues that the ladder is precisely the prototype of a language-game: a finite, learnable sequence of moves that, once mastered, allows one to see the world differently. The ladder is not thrown away because it is false; it is discarded because its work is done [20]. This reading aligns with recent work by Floyd [21] and Moyal-Sharrock [22] on Wittgenstein's conception of hinge propositions and certainty, though the research goes further in grounding these insights in the language-game framework. Where Floyd emphasizes the quasi-empirical character of our most basic certainties, the research insists that such certainties are not beliefs at all but forms of acting, ways of going on that are embedded in shared forms of life.

A particularly innovative aspect of the research is its treatment of the Tractatus's ontology of simple objects. For decades, commentators struggled to understand what these objects could be, perhaps sense-data, perhaps points in space-time, perhaps logical atoms with no properties other than the capacity to combine [6]. The research argues that the later language-games solve this puzzle by dissolving it. The demand for "simples" arises from the picture theory's need for a terminus of analysis. But when we turn from formal logic to actual linguistic practices, we find that what counts as simple depends entirely on the language game in play. For a builder, "Slab!" is simple; for a chemist, the same word is analyzable into molecular components. There is no absolute simplicity, only simplicity relative to a practice [23]. This is not a refutation of the Tractatus but its pragmatic realization. The early Wittgenstein searched for the simples and failed to find them; the later Wittgenstein realized that the search itself was a grammatical confusion.

The Rise of Language-Games: From Silence to Practice

The concept of the language-game (*Sprachspiel*) first appears not in the *Investigations* but in Wittgenstein's transitional writings from the early 1930s, particularly the *Big Typescript* and the *Blue Book* [24]. The research provides an exceptionally detailed philological account of this emergence, drawing on the Bergen Electronic Edition to trace how the term evolves from a pedagogical device used to illustrate simple linguistic interactions into a full-blown philosophical tool for dissolving traditional problems [15]. One of the research's most illuminating sections compares the language-game of "bringing a building stone" from §2 of the *Investigations* with the Tractarian atomic proposition. In the Tractatus, the simplest proposition ("aRb") is a logical construction whose sense derives entirely from its internal structure. In the language-game of the builders, the shout "Slab!" has no internal logical

structure; its meaning is exhausted by its role in coordinating action [4]. The research, however, argues that this difference is less radical than it appears. Both the atomic proposition and the builders' shout are *primitive* in their respective systems. Both serve as the foundation upon which more complex linguistic behaviour is built. The difference is that the Tractatus took logical primitiveness to be formal and universal, whereas the *Investigations* takes it to be empirical and local.

This shift from universal to local primitives is the key to understanding how language-games endure beyond the Tractatus. The research draws on Kripke's influential but controversial reading of Wittgenstein on rule-following [25] to argue that the later Wittgenstein's solution to the paradox of interpretation is already foreshadowed in the Tractatus's treatment of logical form. Kripke famously argued that Wittgenstein's rule-following considerations lead to a sceptical paradox: no finite set of past applications of a rule determines a unique future application [25]. Wittgenstein's "sceptical solution," in Kripke's reading, appeals to community agreement as the ultimate ground of correctness. The research challenges this reading by showing that the Tractatus already contains a non-propositional account of rule-following: the logical form that language shares with the world is something we *do*, not something we *know*. In other words, the Tractarian "showing" is the primitive form of rule-following that the later Wittgenstein merely makes explicit [26].

The research's most original contribution in this section is its analysis of what it calls the "gestalt shift" between the Tractarian picture and the language-game. Just as a duck-rabbit figure can be seen as either duck or rabbit but not both simultaneously, the early and late Wittgenstein present two different gestalts of the same philosophical terrain [27]. The Tractatus sees language from the outside as a logical calculus whose connection to the world is mysterious and ineffable. The *Investigations* sees language from the inside, as a set of activities whose connection to the world is immediate and unproblematic because the world just is the horizon of those activities. The research argues that this gestalt shift is not a change of view but a change of viewpoint. And the value of the language-game framework is that it allows us to occupy the inside viewpoint while remembering the outside viewpoint's lesson that any attempt to theorize the inside viewpoint from the outside is doomed to nonsense. This is a delicate philosophical stance, and the research is admirably clear about its precariousness.

Scholarship on Wittgenstein's middle period has grown substantially in the last two decades, thanks in large part to the digitization of the Nachlass. Researchers such as Pichler [15] and Dejnozka [28] have shown that the years 1929–

1933 were a time of intense experimentation, during which Wittgenstein tried out various metaphors for language: the calculus, the game, the tool, the city, before settling on the family-resemblance concept of language-games. The research under review makes excellent use of this material, particularly the *Philosophical Remarks* and *Philosophical Grammar*, to show that the language-game was not a sudden invention but a gradual crystallization [29]. One of the research's most striking claims is that Wittgenstein's famous "beetle in the box" thought experiment from the private language sections was first sketched in a 1934 manuscript, still using the language of the *Tractatus*. The continuity is textual, not merely thematic.

Rule-Following, Private Language, and the Social Turn

No discussion of Wittgenstein's enduring language-games would be complete without addressing the private language argument, which the research treats in considerable depth. The argument, found in *Philosophical Investigations* §§243–315, aims to show that a language whose words refer to private, inner sensations accessible only to the speaker is impossible [4]. The standard interpretation, defended by Kenny [6] and others, holds that the argument turns on the impossibility of establishing criteria of correctness for the use of such terms. If I cannot check whether my use of "pain" agrees with some private sample, then I have no way of distinguishing correct from incorrect application; the very notion of correctness collapses. The research accepts this general line but enriches it with a novel claim: that the *Tractatus*'s doctrine of showing provides the unacknowledged premise for the private language argument. In the *Tractatus*, the subject is a metaphysical limit of the world, not a part of it [1]. The "I" that has sensations is not an object among objects but a point of view. The private language argument, the research suggests, arises when we try to turn this transcendental subject into an empirical one. The impossibility of a private language is not an empirical finding about human cognitive limits; it is a grammatical reminder that inner processes stand in need of outward criteria [30].

This reading has significant implications for the social interpretation of Wittgenstein that has dominated Anglophone philosophy since the 1980s. The research pushes back against what it calls the "communitarian excess" of readings that make language-games entirely dependent on community consensus [31]. While acknowledging Wittgenstein's debt to the social character of language, the research insists that the later Wittgenstein never abandoned the Tractarian insight that understanding is ultimately a matter of shared forms of life, not shared agreement. As the research phrases it, "Agreement in judgments is not agreement in opinions; it is agreement in

lives." This distinction, borrowed from Cavell's seminal work on Wittgenstein [32], allows the research to steer between the Scylla of solipsism and the Charybdis of relativism. We do not agree on interpretations of rules; we simply act in certain ways, and those ways show, not say. The research thus aligns itself with what has come to be called the "third Wittgenstein" literature, the turn toward Wittgenstein's remarks on certainty, action, and primitive reactions [22].

Where the research is most critical of existing scholarship is in its treatment of the relationship between language-games and normativity. Recent work by Brandom [33] and Haugeland [34] has attempted to reconstruct Wittgenstein's insights within a systematic theory of normative pragmatics. Brandom in particular has developed an elaborate inferentialist semantics inspired by the *Investigations*, treating linguistic competence as the mastery of a game of giving and asking for reasons [33]. The research finds Brandom's project illuminating but ultimately at odds with Wittgenstein's therapeutic aims. To turn language-games into a normative theory is to commit the very mistake Wittgenstein sought to avoid: treating a method for dissolving problems as a solution to them. The research argues that Brandom's Wittgenstein is a rationalist Wittgenstein, a Wittgenstein who cares about justification and validity. But the real Wittgenstein, the research insists, cares about nothing of the sort. He cares about the ordinary, the habitual, the unreflective about what we do *before* we start giving reasons [35]. This critique is sharp and, this reviewer believes, largely convincing. It also points toward the research's final major theme: the political and ethical dimensions of language-games.

An additional strength of the research's treatment of rule-following is its engagement with John McDowell's later work [36]. McDowell has argued that Kripke's sceptical reading mischaracterizes Wittgenstein's appeal to community practice as a form of social conventionalism. For McDowell, the real lesson of the rule-following considerations is that our ability to grasp and follow rules is a primitive, non-reducible feature of mindedness, something that cannot be explained in terms of anything more basic [36]. The research endorses this anti-reductionist reading while adding a historical dimension: the primitive "going on in the same way" that McDowell emphasizes is, for Wittgenstein, the same as the Tractarian "showing." It is the bedrock of sense-making that cannot be further analyzed because any analysis would already presuppose it.

Language-Games as Political and Ethical Therapeutics

One of the most welcome features of the research under review is its refusal to restrict Wittgenstein's later philosophy to the narrow confines of linguistic analysis.

Over the past two decades, a growing literature has explored the political implications of language-games, often under the banner of “Wittgensteinian political philosophy” [37]. Thinkers such as James Tully [38], Chantal Mouffe [39], and Linda Zerilli [40] have drawn on Wittgenstein to critique liberal universalism, to theorize political contestation as a clash of language-games, and to reconceive democratic legitimacy as a form of “rule-following without rules.” The research engages with this literature carefully, praising its insights but cautioning against what it calls “the domestic analogy”, the idea that political communities are simply large-scale language-games. The research argues that language games are too heterogeneous and too local to serve as models for political order. A state is not a language-game; it is a tangled network of overlapping, conflicting, and mutually incomprehensible language-games [41]. The political task, then, is not to imagine a single language-game for the polis but to manage the friction between games.

This is a sophisticated position, and the research develops it through a close reading of Wittgenstein’s remarks on certainty from *On Certainty*. In that late work, Wittgenstein considers the possibility of a dispute between two people who hold fundamentally different “world-pictures”, for example, a scientist and someone who believes the earth came into existence five minutes ago [42]. Wittgenstein argues that such a dispute is not a matter of evidence or logic; it is a clash of systems that have no neutral ground for adjudication. The research extends this insight to political conflict. When two language-games, the language-game of neoliberal economics and the language-game of indigenous communal land tenure, come into conflict, there is no higher language-game that can resolve the disagreement. The only genuine resolution is a transformation of one or both games from within, a transformation that Wittgenstein captures with the image of persuasion: “I would try to give him a picture of the world” [42]. The research notes, however, that Wittgenstein never specifies how such persuasion works, and this omission is a genuine limitation. The research itself does not fully remedy it, but it does point toward a fruitful area for future investigation: the rhetoric of language-games, the art of shifting someone from one grammar to another without appealing to neutral reasons [43].

On the ethical front, the research returns to the Tractarian theme of silence. The later Wittgenstein rarely speaks of ethics directly, but the research argues that the entire method of language-games is an ethical practice. To attend to the ordinary, to resist the temptation of metaphysics, to show rather than say, these are not merely philosophical techniques but spiritual exercises in the Stoic and Augustinian traditions that Wittgenstein absorbed [44]. The research draws on the work of Cray [45] and Read [46] to

argue that Wittgenstein’s anti-theoretical stance is itself a form of ethical responsiveness. When we stop trying to find the essence of justice and instead look at how the word “justice” actually functions in legal hearings, protest chants, and parent-child arguments, we do not lose access to justice; we gain a more humane, more contextual, more attentive relationship to it. This is not relativism; it is the opposite. Relativism says every standard is as good as any other. Wittgensteinian ethics says that standards are embedded in practices, and practices are the only things we have, so we had better attend to them carefully.

The research’s treatment of the political is, however, notably silent on questions of power and domination. While it critiques communitarian excesses, it does not fully engage with critical theorists who have argued that language-games can themselves be sites of oppression. For instance, Iris Marion Young’s work on asymmetric power in communicative practices is not mentioned, nor is Nancy Fraser’s critique of Habermas’s ideal speech situation from a Wittgensteinian perspective [47]. This omission is regrettable because it leaves the research’s political conclusions somewhat abstract. If language-games are forms of life, and forms of life are not chosen but lived, how can we criticize a form of life that systematically marginalizes certain voices? The research gestures toward an answer, persuasion, and attention, but does not provide a robust account of how normative criticism is possible from within a language game. This is not a fatal flaw; it is a challenge that any Wittgensteinian political philosophy must confront.

Critical Assessment: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Unresolved Tensions

Having summarized the research’s main arguments, this review now turns to a critical assessment. There is much to admire. The research is meticulously researched, drawing on primary sources from Wittgenstein’s Nachlass as well as a wide range of secondary literature published through 2021. Its central thesis that language-games pick up where the Tractatus left off, transforming its logical mysticism into a practical method, is original and well-defended. The research avoids the twin pitfalls of either treating Wittgenstein as a system-builder or reducing him to a quietist who has nothing positive to say. It finds a middle path: Wittgenstein offers no theories, but he does offer tools, and the research shows how those tools can be adapted to contemporary philosophical problems in semantics, political theory, and ethics. The chapter on rule-following is particularly strong, giving Kripke his due while rejecting the sceptical interpretation that has dominated for forty years.

Nevertheless, the research is not without weaknesses. The most pressing problem is its handling of the Tractatus's mystical propositions. The early Wittgenstein notoriously claimed that ethical and aesthetic value cannot be put into words; they can only show themselves. The research argues that language-games inherit this mystical dimension by treating meaning as immanent in practice rather than transcendently guaranteed. But this claim remains underdeveloped. If language-games are fully public, shareable, and criterion-governed, in what sense are they mystical? The research seems to want both the public accessibility of the later Wittgenstein and the ineffability of the early Wittgenstein, but it never quite explains how these two can coexist [48]. The phrase "showing in action," which the research uses repeatedly, is evocative but not analytical. One is left wondering whether the research has simply given a new name to a familiar problem, the problem of how normative standards can be both socially constituted and genuinely binding without solving it.

A second weakness concerns the research's treatment of non-human language-games. Wittgenstein famously asked whether a lion could speak our language, answering that we would not understand him [4]. The research takes this as a point about forms of life being incommensurable. But it does not address the burgeoning literature on animal cognition and language, much of which draws on Wittgenstein to argue for a continuum rather than a radical break between human and animal practices [49]. The research's claim that language-games are uniquely human because they involve rule-following in the strong sense is asserted rather than argued. Given recent work on primate communication and the philosophy of animal minds, this is a missed opportunity. A more thorough engagement with empirical findings would have strengthened the research's philosophical conclusions.

Third, the research is oddly silent on the question of translation between language-games. If different language-games have different grammars, how do we move from one to another? The research gestures toward "persuasion" but does not develop the notion. This is not merely a lacuna; it is a potential contradiction. For if language-games are truly autonomous, there is no neutral metalanguage in which to redescribe one game to the practitioners of another. And yet we do this all the time, we explain poetry to scientists, science to poets, law to laypeople. The research needs to account for this everyday phenomenon without collapsing back into universalism. A promising avenue, which the research does not explore, would be to appeal to the later Wittgenstein's remarks on "aspect perception": moving between language-games is not a matter of translation but of seeing-as, a kind of imaginative exertion that has no algorithm [27].

Finally, the research's prose, while clear, occasionally falls into a repetitive thesis-restatement pattern that could have been tightened. The central claim that language-games endure beyond the Tractatus is repeated verbatim at least a dozen times. A more streamlined structure, with fewer assertions and more sustained argumentation, would have improved the work. Similarly, the research's engagement with the resolute reading of the Tractatus is thorough but sometimes defensive; the author seems eager to prove that the research is not merely derivative of Conant and Diamond. A more confident work would have simply absorbed the resolute reading and moved beyond it rather than repeatedly citing it as a shield.

I. CONCLUSION

More than seventy years after Wittgenstein's death, the language-game remains one of the most generative and contested concepts in philosophy. The research under review makes a compelling case that this generative power stems from the concept's Janus-faced character: it looks back to the Tractatus's austere logic of showing and saying, and it looks forward to a therapeutic practice of attending to the ordinary. The research is at its best when it refuses to choose between these two faces, insisting instead that Wittgenstein's enduring contribution is precisely the ability to hold them together in productive tension. This is not an easy position to maintain. The history of Wittgenstein interpretation is littered with scholars who tilted too far in one direction or another, turning the later Wittgenstein into a behaviourist, a pragmatist, a quietist, or a communitarian. The research avoids these reductions by keeping its focus on what Wittgenstein actually did: he showed, through countless examples and thought experiments, how to dissolve philosophical perplexities by returning words from their metaphysical to their everyday use. The language game is the name for that return.

What does the future hold for Wittgensteinian language-games? The research gestures toward several promising directions but does not fully develop them. One is the application of language-game analysis to digital and algorithmic forms of life. Social media platforms, video games, and AI chatbots generate new linguistic practices that are neither fully private nor fully public, neither rule-governed nor rule-less. Wittgenstein's concepts of "family resemblance" and "form of life" are uniquely suited to analyzing these hybrid phenomena, but the work has barely begun. Another direction is the intersection of language-games with embodied cognition and enactive approaches to mind. If meaning is use, and use is embodied activity, then the old Cartesian picture of mind as inner theatre collapses. Wittgenstein anticipated much of what is now called 4E

cognition (embodied, embedded, extended, enactive), and the research could have drawn out these connections more explicitly. A third direction, touched upon but not explored, is the political economy of language-games. Who gets to define the rules? Who has the authority to say what counts as a correct move? These are questions of power, and while Wittgenstein was famously apolitical, his concepts have been taken up by critical theorists to analyze how dominant language-games marginalize alternative voices.

This review article has attempted to honour the research's ambition while noting its limitations. The research succeeds in showing that the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations* are not two incompatible philosophies but two moments in a single, lifelong struggle against the bewitchment of language by means of language. The language game is the weapon forged in this struggle, and it remains sharp. But a weapon is only as useful as the hand that wields it. The research's greatest service is to remind us that Wittgenstein's legacy is not a set of doctrines to be defended or refuted but a set of practices to be continued. To go beyond the *Tractatus* is not to leave it behind; it is to carry its silence into the noisy, messy, beautiful ordinary language of human life. The research under review is a worthy companion on that journey, one that will reward careful reading by specialists and advanced students alike and, one hopes, inspire further work on the untapped potential of language-games for contemporary philosophy.

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